EMPHASIS: PROGRESS

Above: The first Rand McNally map of Montana, 1876. This edition looks very strange to us today.

No sophisticated equipment for highway work in 1912. This photo, below, shows a grading crew from Havre.

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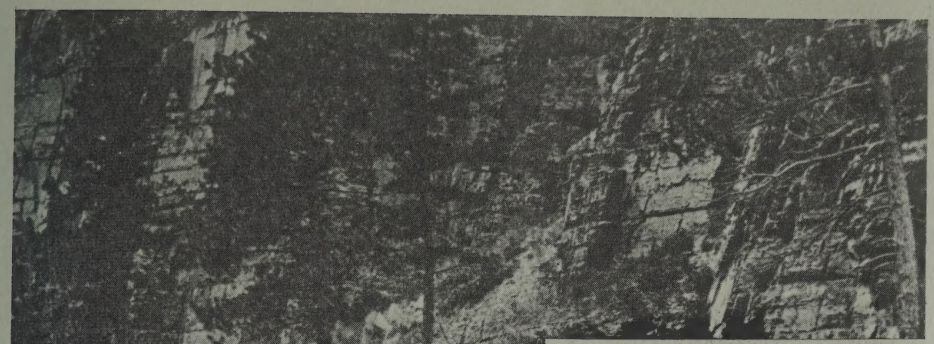
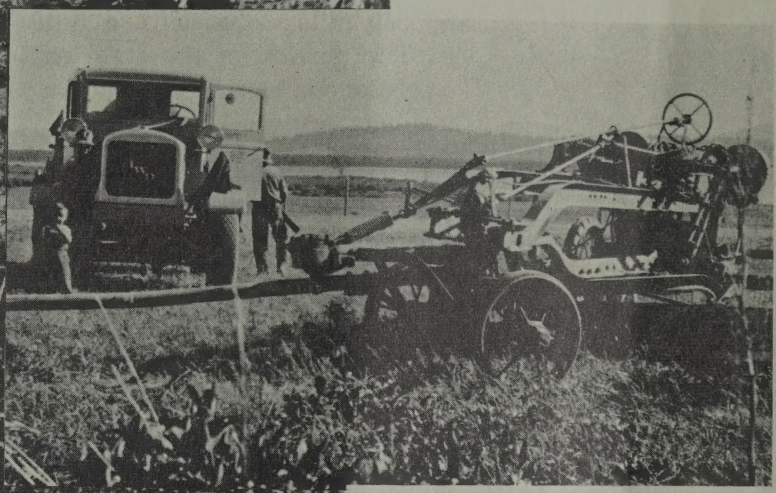
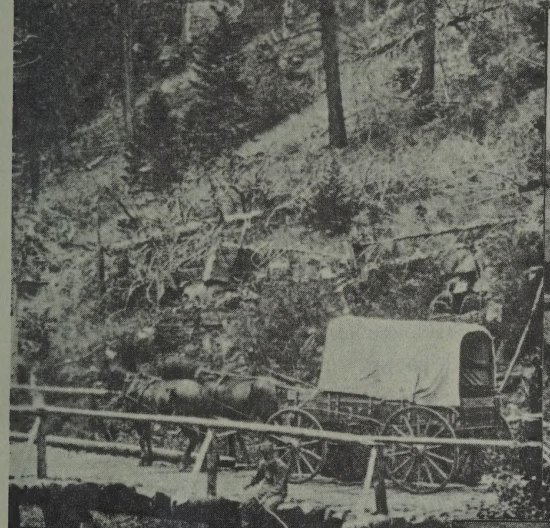
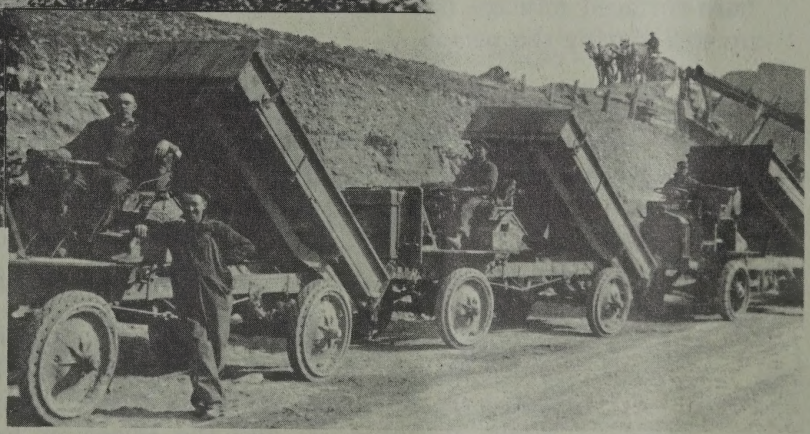


A "structure", left, at Prickly Pear — evidently the bridge, or the day, or both, caught a fisherman.

The equipment, below, is almost hard to describe; but it turns out to be an old 1925 grader.

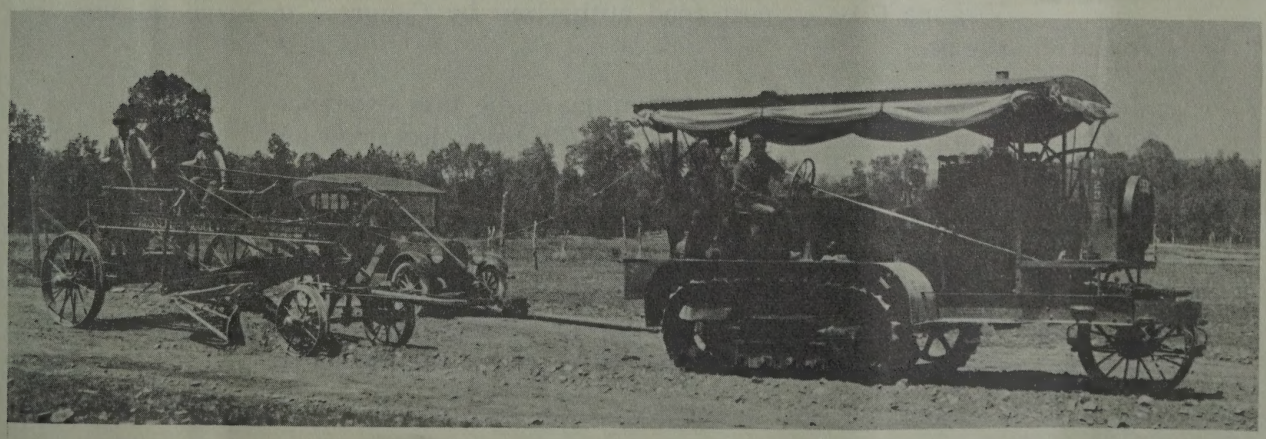






Right: Dump trucks in dress parade, 1925.

Below: Road crew at Bridger Creek, 1916.



TREASURY OF ROADS IN THE TREASURE STATE

LARGE STATE—LARGE NEEDS

Montana's highway picture is a dramatic one: The state's huge highway plant consists of over 73,885 miles of roads and streets—all needed because of its "wide open" expanses and the great distances between communities.

Montana, the fourth largest state in the Union, is 275 miles wide and 550 miles long, with a total land area of 147,138 square miles.

The portion of the state east of the Continental Divide consists largely of vast prairies used for livestock raising and dryland grain farming.

The portion of the state west of the Continental Divide consists largely of mountains, forests, lakes and streams, with most of the development in the large mountain valleys.

The characteristics of vast distances and restricted population—707,000—make it mandatory that a large network of highways, roads and streets be constructed and maintained to serve the State's transportation needs.

From 1950 to 1965, the mileage of state highways grew from 8,878 miles to 11,649 miles, an increase of 31%. During the same period, hard-surfaced mileage has increased from 5,547 miles to 8,285 miles, up 49% during the period.

GOLD—AND MILITARY ROADS CAME EARLY

Gold was discovered in Montana in the early 1860's. The inevitable flood of settlers first focused attention upon the need for roads in the state—roads to connect mining settlements with Missouri river ports and with the now-growing population centers of the west and midwest.

Some help came from the construction of early Military roads under Federal jurisdiction, such as the 624-mile Mullan Road, completed in 1863, running from Fort Benton on the Missouri to Walla Walla, Washington; and the Bozeman Road from Fort Laramie to Virginia City—a post road authorized by Congress to serve mining camps.

In 1864, the year the Territory of Montana came into existence by separation from the Territory of Idaho, the Governor described for the first Territorial legislature the need for a trans-continental highway to pass through Montana.

From the time in 1889 when Montana became the 41st state admitted into the union, through the struggles of the early 1900's during which the first Highway Commission was formed in 1913, Montana's road system painfully began taking shape.

The passage of the Federal-aid Road Act in 1916 had a major effect on highway construction. The law authorized the release of Federal funds for post road construction and required matching by state or local funds.

From this period on, the development of highways as we know them began in earnest. Changes in managerial, administrative, technical aspects began keeping pace—roadwise—with increased demands, heightened activities, and human as well as economic impacts.

ATTENTION FOCUSED ON SAFETY

Almost all areas of man's activities were to show miraculous changes during the technological revolution of the 20th century—the roadbuilding industry included. Today, with vastly improved equipment, immeasurable advances in technical knowledge including computerized data, communication, better integration of planning, highway construction is a much-advanced process carried out by the army of skilled men and women—over 2,000 strong in the Treasure State.

The result of this concentrated effort is the new and modern super highway designed and built to exacting specifications. It is expected to carry its heavy traffic loads for many years with efficiency, safety and utmost driving ease.

A growing emphasis on highway beautification is shown by the thoughtful alignment of the roadway to make the most picturesque frame for Nature's beauty spots; the preservation of streams and recreation areas; and the addition of eye-pleasing grasses, shrubs and trees. Beautifully located roadside rest areas are provided along Montana's major highways to give the motorist a brief and enjoyable rest.

Montana's Interstate system when completed will total 1,185.7 miles. On January 1st of 1968, some 622 miles of Interstate highway was open to daily traffic use, with a small portion under contract.

If funds remain available, the Highway Department has foreseen no difficulty in meeting the established completion date in the mid-1970's.

STATE'S HIGHWAYS LEAD HERE—THERE—EVERYWHERE

Montana's highways, roads, streets lead where you want to go: to homes of relatives or friends, schools, churches, businesses and industrial locations—to major cities; to farm or market; to colleges, universities, cultural centers—to historical sites, libraries, museums, theatres—to Glacier or Yellowstone parks; or any of the 19 other state parks—to 9 national forests—to your favorite spot on any of the state's 57 rivers.

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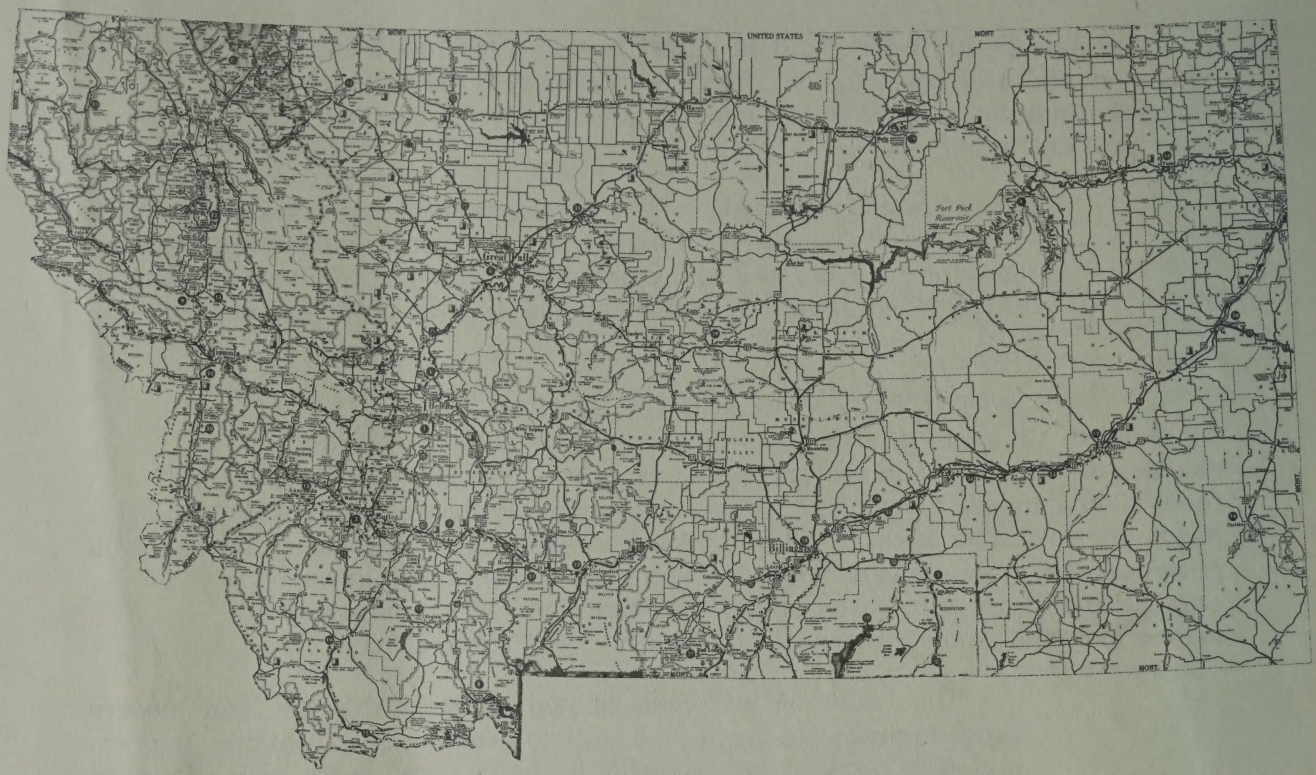
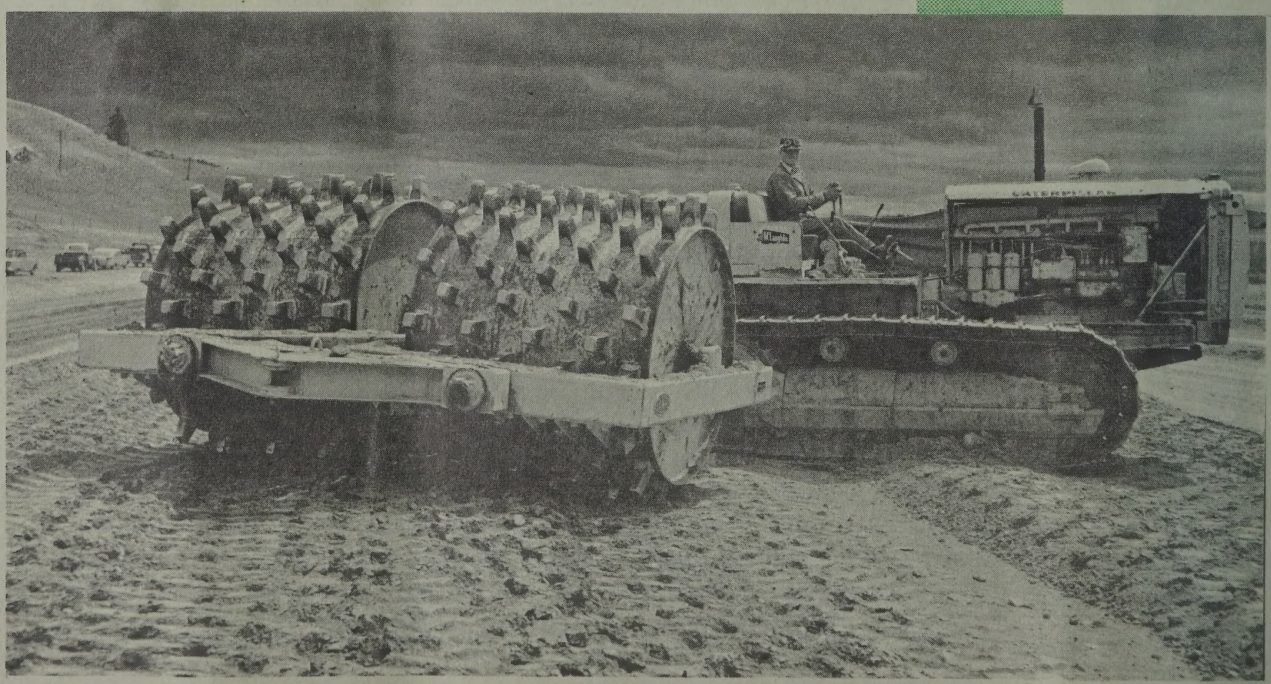
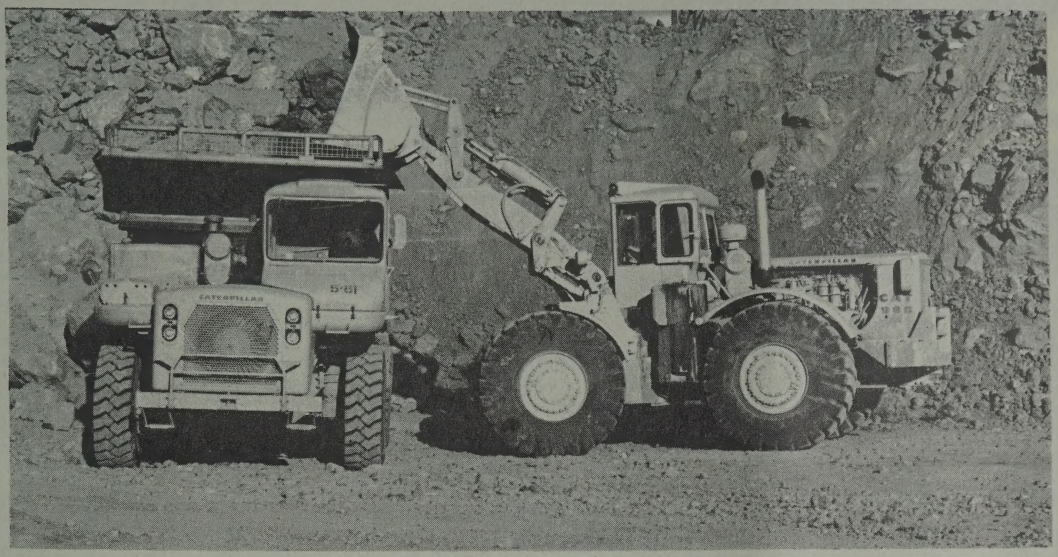


The map of Montana for 1968 shows some significant changes—highway net and the interstate.

Below: An enterprising highway photographer caught construction underway on I-90 near Gold Creek in 1959.

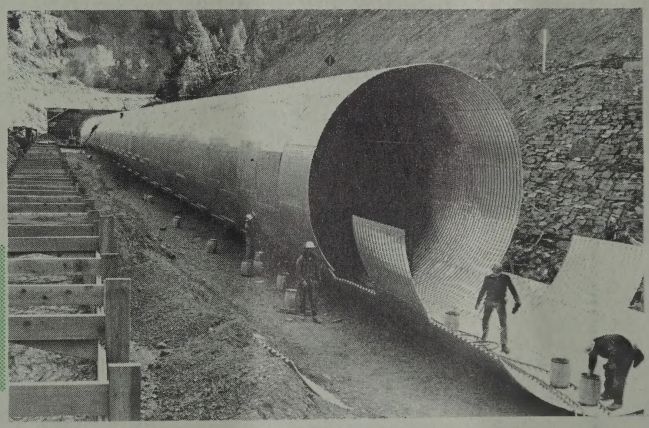


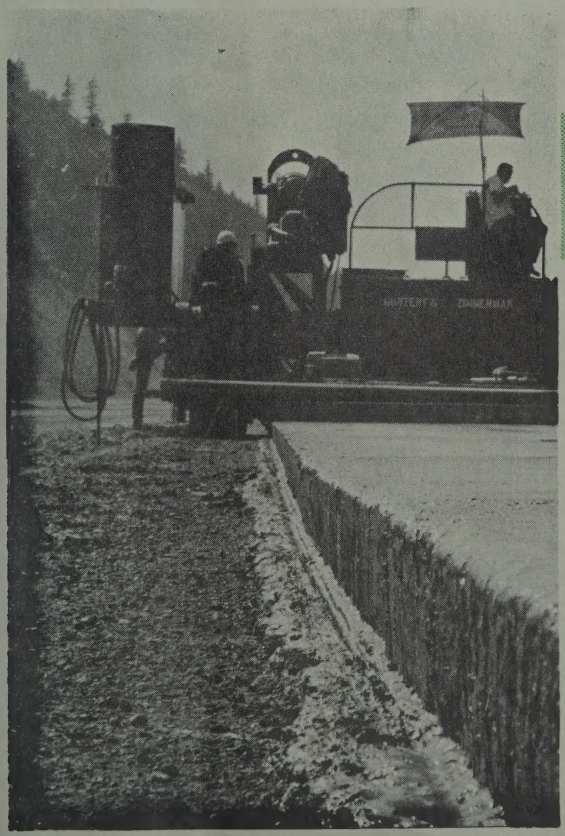


Above: Road building equipment at work on I-15 near Wolf Creek. The changes in heavy equipment design are obvious, 1966.

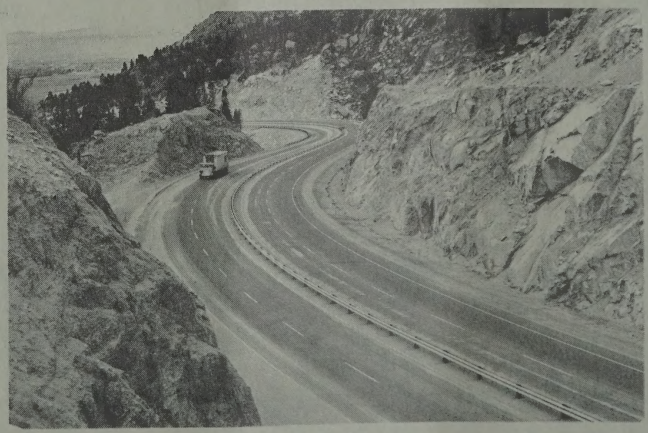
Below: Culvert big enough to handle the flow of a river was needed in Wolf Creek Canyon in 1965.

Below: Forced perspective dramatically shows automated highway paver at work on Montana Interstate, 1966.





Below: The Spectacular views on Homestake Pass into Butte, Montana, are almost enough to take one's breath away, 1966.



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an be reached quickly and with increasing
ntana's growing and improving highway

It is expected that population in Montana will total 930,000 persons by 1985, an increase of 32% over the estimated 707,000 persons in 1965. During the same twenty-year period, it is anticipated that motor vehicle registrations will increase from 426,000 in 1965 to 700,000 in 1985, a 64% boost. Traffic is also expected to increase from 3.7 billion vehicle miles in 1965 to 6.9 billion vehicle miles in 1985—up 87%.

An earlier highway-needs study, recently brought up to date, shows that an astounding amount of $2,086,526,000 in construction funds would be required to bring the state highway systems, rural roads, and city streets up to the standards required to adequately serve the traffic that is expected by 1985.

NUGGETS FROM THE TREASURE STATE

Controlling ice and snow in fiscal 1967 cost the state $1,947,378.41 for labor, materials and equipment.

* * *

Eighty-five cents of every highway dollar goes for construction.

* * *

Four and one-half cents of your gas dollar goes for administration, research, advertising and promotion.

* * *

Average permanent employment by the highway department is 2,112 persons, including 400 engineers.

* * *

Tourists contributed about $89,926,000 to the state economy in 1967.

* * *

Ten and one-half cents of the highway dollar goes for maintenance.

* * *

The highway department is budgeted to spend $78,590,383 in fiscal 1969 which began July 1.

* * *

The highway department has expended $15,404,702 during the past 5 years on highway contracts within municipal areas.

The Interstate system when completed will have a total of 1,185.7 miles, and now stands 56% complete or under contract, which leaves 510 miles to be completed.

* * *

Contracts let in calendar 1967 for all types of construction on the state highway system amounted to $46,961,527.55.

* * *

As of January 1, 1968, Montana had 11,236 miles of paved urban, secondary, primary and Interstate highways across the state.

* * *

Motor vehicles registered in Montana in 1967 totaled 521,191, up 35% from 1957.

* * *

The highway money comes from highway users taxes—no general fund:

26.6% state gas tax, $24,000,000; 65.6% Federal-Aid, $39,000,000; 7.8% GVW, misc., etc., $18,000,000; cities, counties ½¢ gas tax, $1,500,000.

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